Addingham Parish Council – Budget and Precept 2018/19

Statement by Parish Council

The Parish Council has approved its budget for expenditure next financial year, resulting in a precept demand which will be some 68% higher than last year’s. This is because the council is raising funds to put towards the costs of necessary repairs to the Old School, a listed Grade II building in the centre of the village, which normally houses the community library and council meeting room. In Spring this year, a smaller scale project to refurbish the building, which was to have been funded from the council’s reserves, had to be aborted when major structural defects were discovered. The new capital project will involve more extensive (and expensive) alterations to the property to renovate it, and, although the council will apply for grant funding, the remaining investment required will probably be beyond the council’s financial reach, without drawing on further precept monies.

Chairman of the Council, Catherine Coates, says, “We have taken this serious decision to raise the precept so that we can be sure we have enough money in the bank to get the Old School repaired and open for use again as soon as possible. If we’re successful in our grant applications, we may not need to use it, and we will adjust the precept next year. But for now, our priority has to be to get our community library back, dry and warm, in its home in the Old School.”

Notes

1. Budgeted expenditure approved for the year, including funds for the capital investment in the Old School, totals £98,845, of which £25,000 is to be added to funds already earmarked for the project in the council’s bank reserves. A precept of £98,845 results in a Band D property payment of £57.87, compared with a payment of £34.95 in 2017/18.
2. The aborted refurbishment project was to cost in the region of £45,000, and was designed to improve the heating systems in the Old School, replace the windows, and decorate it. Builders had started work on site, when defects were discovered in the support to the upper floor. The new capital project will involve repairs to the upper floor and strengthening of the walls. After the building has been made sound again, the plans to refurbish it will be brought forward. Since the structure is being renovated as part of the repairs, it will also be possible to make additional improvements, including the installation of an inner staircase and toilet facility. It is thought that the new project will cost in the region of £80,000 to £100,000, but it is hoped that a proportion of funding may be available from grant funding bodies.
3. The community library has been managing in a temporary portacabin parked behind the Memorial Hall since February 2017. The space is too small to accommodate much of the stock, and the excess is currently stored off site, along with the books, files and archived material belonging to the parish council.